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ABSTRACT

Interaction theory has not been applied to interpersonal communication because the Western scientific model requires that variables be consciously apparent. A simple model of sending and receiving is not adequate to explain the complex nature of human communication, however. The dyadic pattern of interrelationship may be expanded to reflect the subtleties of interaction through the inclusion of the concepts of continuous feedback, covert forces and internal monologue, and the qualitative measures of "acting out," and "working through." Authority and power relationships may be explained in terms of mutually accepted dominance and submission roles and communication patterns. Working together productively implies the knowledge of the dynamic and often subconscious processes in human communication. (KS)

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ZEN AND THE ART OF COMPUTER MAINTENANCE[1]

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From the utilization of radio in World War II we in speech communication have inherited the SMCR model. In electronic communication with one person sending and another receiving for substantial periods of time and where nonverbal elements played a minor role it made sense. SMCR divided the communicative act into fairly discrete component parts that could be tinkered with independently with beneficial consequences to overall effectiveness.

Specifically, the sending unit (S) was made to function better by selecting more competent human operators and by training them. Also transmitting devices were improved. The message (M) was capable of refinement by designing arrangements of stimuli that were proved to be relatively more intelligible than others. Choice of channel (C) was another important variable. If great distances were to be covered, short wave radio was the preferred channel, if atmospheric disturbances were a problem, frequency modulation was indicated, and if the transmission was over mountains and into valleys, amplitude modulated radio waves communicated quite reliably. The receiver (R) like the sender was improved by increasing human talent and training, and receiving equipment evolved steadily, conveying the decoded intelligence from modulated carrier waves more efficiently.

CS 501 407

As soon as WWII shooting was over, classroom teachers of speech communication converted the SMCR model from radio to interpersonal, face-to-face talking and listening. Obviously, spoken communication consisted of the same component variables, and scrutinizing the speech act from these four perspectives had diagnostic and remedial possibilities. So we wrote books and designed courses around the four "building blocks" of effective speech. At will, we could concentrate upon sending (voice, gesture, posture, movement), message (organization, support, linguistic elements), channel (formal or informal, dyad or grouped audience, environmental conditions), and the receiver was given two kinds of scholarly treatment. He was examined to assess his response potential (vocabulary, knowledge, interests) and he was trained to become a more efficient processor of incoming stimuli (was given training in listening comprehension). Using SMCR as a frame for study of the speech act produced many benefits, but a disadvantage became increasingly annoying as "interaction theory" became more prevalent among those specializing in interpersonal communication. The nagging reality finally came into awareness. SMCR was a linear model. It assumed that someone talks and someone listens, passively, as in radio communication. The trouble with radio is you have to take turns talking, in contrast to the telephone which is like a face-to-face dyad in that both people can talk at the same time, as much as they wish.

Closer study of persons interacting in real life confirmed the

hypothesis that what goes on is circular rather than linear. One person initiates the interaction, the other responds (verbally or nonverbally), the first person modifies what he intended to say or do, the other reacts, etc. The project becomes a joint venture, with both participants adjusting continuously to what happens from moment to moment. In an attempt to modify SMCR to make it capable of describing such reciprocation, we added a feedback arrow from R to S. This was better than nothing, but still left the sender (S) doing all the adjusting. It also failed to represent the extensive contributions of the receiver (R) in determining direction and content of interactive communication. Reluctantly we concluded that SMCR has had its day and must be consigned to the scrap heap of helpful theories that became obsolete. Only a model that <u>looks</u> [illegible] <u>transaction</u> rather than sending and receiving can help us to show how two or more persons pool their resources and become jointly responsible for the outcome of the venture they undertake together.

An Interactive Model

Increased understanding of interpersonal communication led to the conclusion that the basic element in simple or complex relationships is the <u>dyad</u>. Essentially the same dyadic interaction process takes place between a speaker and each member of his audience that happens when two persons converse by themselves. When a public speaker makes a point, one person in the audience may accept it while the individual in the adjacent seat rejects it. One auditor

finds the speaker's manifest personality repulsive, his neighbor feels strong empathy toward the speaker as a most lovable human being. Thus, audience response is neither a common reaction of its members nor an average of their individual responses. More meaningfully, it is the range of cognition and feeling developed in the dyads created by each member of the audience and the speaker.

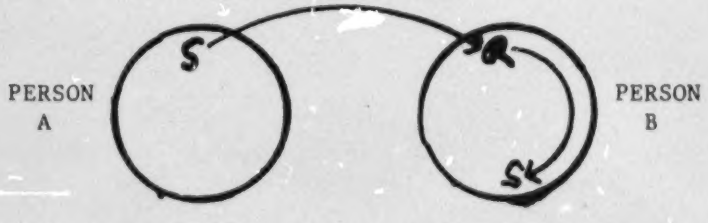
Transactional communication theory supports the conclusion that no two dyadic interactions are identical. So, any two persons who are aware of their mutual stimulus response activities are creating a unique shared experience, and combinations of these pairs make up the simplest or most involved arrangements of person to person communication. This is also true of mass media interactions, but less obviously so, since feedback is delayed and members of the audience are separated. Once again the dyad is the basic unit. For example, the relationship that television superstar Cher and a rancher in Montana build together is similarly unique.

Since two persons together create an interaction, and since either can change or terminate it at will, responsibility for what happens and for the outcomes is shared. The conclusion which follows is that the participants in a unit of dyadic interpersonal communication are, ideally, equally accountable. This is possible when the communicators are free to react to message elements. Later, we will deal with extraneous and internal influences which distort this theoretical and desirable balance of responsibility.

If we agree that the fundamental element of interpersonal communication is the dyad, we can proceed to construct a dyadic model. To meet our needs it should dramatize the continuous modification of behavior of each person, caused by perception of the other, it should imply equal responsibility for the communication event, and it should portray the intrapersonal dimension of communication as well as the interpersonal process.

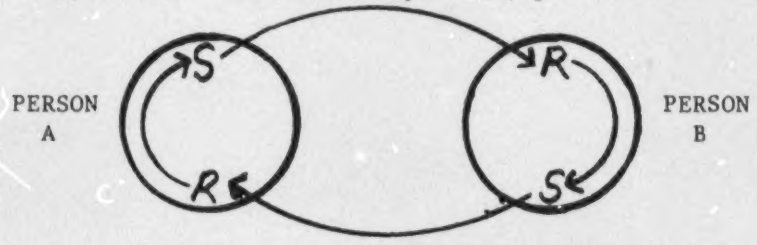
Let us assume that the circles below represent two persons, A who is a supervisor and B who is an employee supervised by A. As the interaction begins, A is approaching B, his purpose being to offer B a suggestion to improve the way he does his job.

A rushes up to B full of good intentions. He initiates the interaction by saying, "Hey, B, I want to talk to you about how you are doing your job."



It happens that B in addition to being a subordinate under A is also a timid soul, chronically insecure and apprehensive. When the boss hurries up with an abruptly expressed intent of discussing B's working methods, B is alarmed, and sends back a nonverbal message through a stiffened body, raised eyebrows, and compressed lips.

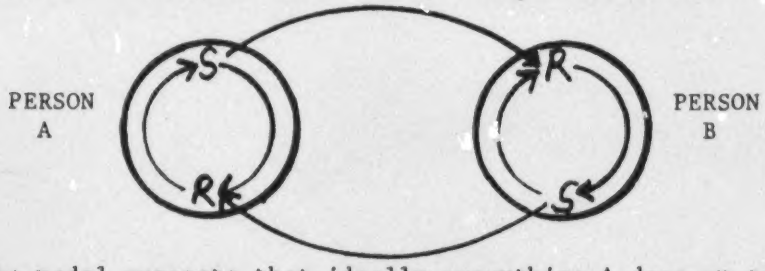
Fortunately A is a sensitive communicator, and he picks up the nonverbal message. Many of us would pay no attention to B's reaction. We would just go ahead and say what we had planned to say. A, however, not only interprets the cue as a sign that B is disturbed, but knows he must adapt to this immediately. So, instead of continuing with his planned message, he changes his next verbal unit to "Hey, relax. It is not important, just a minor detail!"



As the developing model shows, important events are happening intrapersonally. When B becomes alarmed and sends the nonverbal cue of apprehension, it influences his reception of the next bit of communication from A. B at this point has only one interest, to find out how much threat there is in A's visit. And when A sends his line of reassurance, this conditions his reception of the next message from B, for A's concern at this moment is to determine if B is sufficiently calmed down to go to work on the job suggestion, or whether it will be necessary to provide more reassurance. When we represent these internal dynamics of A and B, the dyadic model shows the interacting variables and is complete.

To relieve suspense concerning the A and B interaction, we assume that after A's reassurance, B responds by saying, "Well, you

can't blame me for getting uptight! You came on real strong!" A then must either provide more reassurance, or continue with his original message. He decides that B has indeed been reassured, and they proceed to interact about details of job modification.



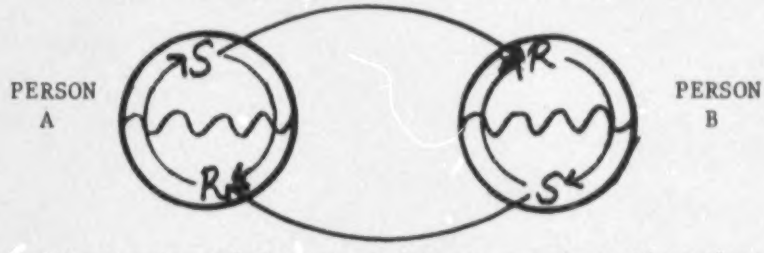
The model suggests that ideally everything A does or says causes B to behave differently than would otherwise have been the case. Further, whatever A receives modifies what he sends, and everything A sends changes the way he receives the next bit of communication. The same is true of B. We have a dyadic interaction model of communication showing continuous feedback and complete interdependence.

Perhaps it would be useful to note an analogical distinction that may help the reader to see a further significant difference between sending and receiving and an interactive concept of communication. Sending-receiving is often viewed as a zero-sum, win-lose contest, while interaction theory conceptualizes the communication event as a normatively variable sum, win-win game. The zero-sum viewpoint assumes that "good" is limited so that one can gain only as much as his opponent loses. The win-win approach postulates unlimited "good", admitting the possibility that both participants in an interaction may gain, and by sharing resources, increase the

benefits for each other.

Covert Forces and Internal Monologue (IM)

As it stands, the Interactional Model is a non-human EDP type of representation. It assumes that the resources of a person are available when needed. Frequently, perhaps usually, this is not the case. Our humanness often intervenes in the communication process. If this intervention facilitates the use of inner resources, the result is increased productivity. But usually the result of our "person" mediating our intellect is some form of inhibition. Our perceptions are altered, and our ability to respond appropriately to changing circumstances is reduced. The extraneous elements that intrude because we are products of our culture, with a constellation of sensitivities and feelings operating without our awareness, we term COVERT FORCES.



The whirlingcircle model can represent people rather than machines if we draw a wavy line horizontally through the circles representing Person A and Person B. The wavy line stands for Internal Monologue (IM). Internal Monologue is a within-the-person transaction. It has both a conscious or surface level, and underlying levels that are COVERT, or out-of-awareness. IM can be more easily understood

if its elements and their interrelation are diagrammed:

INTERNAL MONOLOGUE (IM)

Conscious Elements	Out-of-Awareness Elements-Covert Forces	
Relevant Monologue	Non-rational Processes	
Monologue about Extraneous Issues and Events	Ego Involvement	
Fantasy	Emotion	Critical Thinking
Rationalization	Anxiety	Processes
	Habit	
	Sexuality	

First, we must note that neither conscious nor covert elements are mutually exclusive. These blend in mixtures in which certain of the elements from time to time become predominant and control response. Now, how do covert forces come to influence the behavior of an intelligent, mature human being?

Internal Monologue is necessary to enable a person to cope with stressful, unanticipated events. When covert forces modify one's reactions to stimuli, the person affected needs to explain his non-rational behavior to himself. He doesn't say, "I'm angry because my group rejected my idea so I'm sulking to punish them." Rather, he tells himself, "I gave them their chance. Now I'll keep quiet and see if they can do something better." This is conscious, pseudo-rational internal monologue, or more precisely, rationalization. It prevents an "objective" interpretation. And the apparent cause of withholding resources is not the real cause! The real cause, the covert force (in this instance anger, jealousy) must be rationalized to fool the owner of the behavior into thinking his/her

conduct is justifiable.

Internal Monologue (IM) is, of course, a constructive and essential ingredient of communication when appropriately used. Preparation for an interaction is accomplished through IM. Rationalization is identified and covert forces are confronted only through intense internal monologue. Here it may be a means of personal growth. The inappropriate use is that which occurs during interaction. Here it limits the response potential of participants. The appropriate balance achieves an abundance of IM to set the stage for communication, followed by almost total elimination of IM once the interaction begins. It is apparent that any significant amount of IM during the communication act divides attention between the internal monologue and the incoming messages, hence reduces the ability of the participant to interact and respond.

The non-rational processes in the IM diagram are monitored by our out-of-awareness critical thinking processes. Our intrinsic common sense in effect disciplines impulses from ego involvement, emotion, anxiety, habit and sexuality much as the super ego of Freudian theory controls the id. We don't have to consciously tell ourselves, "it is silly to become anxious over this minor disruption of my plans." Normally, our out-of-awareness good judgment keeps us from feeling anxiety.

Similarly, impulses to dwell upon narcissistic injury (damage to ego or self-image), to become angry or afraid, or to make an

habitual defense or attack response under situations of mild stress are thwarted by this covert rationality. Of course, the threshold of out-of-awareness control varies from person to person, examples being the unflappable man or woman with abundant "cool" and the hair-trigger individual we label "abnormally sensitive". This reminds us that stress is a phenomenon of perception. What one person perceives as unbearable pressure, another interprets as a normal and minor fluctuation in a day's experiences.

To summarize with some elaboration: there are sources of both rational and non-rational responses that are out-of-awareness and which structure the behavior of an individual. The modified behavior is accompanied by an increase in that person's internal monologue (IM).

If a person engaged in an interpersonal interaction is to be free to adjust to the stimuli in the communication environment, there is little place for internal monologue. His subconscious reasoning provides continuous and almost instantaneous automated responses. There are implemented without being monitored consciously.

When non-rational forces are activated and become dominant, the covert rational elements lose control. Ego involvement, emotion, anxiety, habit and sexuality, alone or in combination, distort the interpretation of message elements and surrounding circumstances. These are rationalized into compelling internal monologue. The

communicator can no longer focus his energies on the moment-to-moment interaction because of the distracting, competing thought patterns of IM. He may lose almost completely his ability to adjust sensibly to changing events.

Of course, much internal monologue is quite independent of covert forces. It is often easy to stop listening and generate in our own minds something much more intriguing than the input from our conversational partner. Relevant monologue may review and anticipate the discussion. Extraneous issues and events that are important to us may claim our attention. Daydreams and other fantasies preoccupy us unless we are able to suppress them. None of these familiar elements of IM require the collaboration of covert forces, although any or all of them may be involved.

Of the several non-rational covert forces, sexuality is probably most resistant to analysis and understanding. Our culture structures male and female roles rigidly, and these roles have been our reality since earliest childhood. Further, we have been taught to suppress thoughts of female-male attraction in other than restricted social circumstances. As a result, men and women find themselves responding quite differently to males and females without knowing why. The women's lib movement and women's studies have attempted to bring sexuality into awareness and explore its effects on groups and individuals.

The functioning of covert forces and internal monologue are

further explained and exemplified in the following discussion of "acting out" and "working through."

Acting Out and Working Through

Transaction as represented in the dyadic interaction model brings to mind Martin Buber's ideal of dialogue, an interaction of such mutuality that meaning exists between the two participants rather than in the mind of either.[2] For communication to approach this ideal, intra and interpersonal feedback loops necessarily complete numerous cycles quickly. Consequently, in free-flowing uninhibited open interactions the circles whirl rapidly, while in labored, closed, tense communication, feedback loops operate seldom and sporadically. As we have noted, internal monologue interferes with the feedback process. What contributes to or reduces the free functioning of internal and external feedback mechanisms should be examined and understood.

A helpful concept comes to us from psychotherapy, the distinction between "acting out" and "working through." The "clever client with a script" is universally frustrating to the therapist. Such a person tricks the therapist into saying whatever has been planned. The patient "acts out" his role, thereby leading the therapist to play a complementary role in the drama. When the client leaves, the therapist is fooled into thinking he has done therapy, the patient gloats over his successful deception, and nothing is accomplished.

"Working through" is necessary for therapeutic communication.

Here patient and therapist combine resources by freely reacting and adjusting to each other's responses. Three symptoms characterize working through that do not accompany acting out: 1) both participants learn relevant information they didn't know before; 2) both find themselves saying things they had not planned to say; and 3) both client and therapist find themselves saying things they are surprised to hear themselves saying.

The acting out and working through distinction can be applied to interpersonal communication in a task-oriented organization. The boss who doesn't listen or is too insecure to take the risk of responding to the unexpected will "play his script" and act out his communicative assignments. He is a one way communicator; he sends, the other member of the dyad receives. The boss who actively incorporates input from his associate and involves the other as a full-scale partner in building the communication unit is working through. The model circles whirl, indicating continuous modification of the thinking of both participants, from moment to moment. They learn new information and say things they had not intended to say, some of which are quite surprising to the person who says them. Not only does the working through mode permit using resources of two people rather than relying on one, but the give and take of two minds working together usually produces more and better output than could the two working separately. Which, I suppose, is the phenomenon that intrigued Buber when he postulated the ideal of "dialogue."

The original whirling circle model represents a "working through" interaction in that Person A and Person B are free to respond to incoming stimuli spontaneously. However, in the original example used to introduce the model, Person B was distracted by internal monologue generated because of a covert force, in this instance fear emotion. He interpreted Person A's mission as threatening, and undoubtedly had many uncontrollable thoughts about the cause of A's intervention and the possible consequences of the developing interaction. At this point, the model should show a wavy IM line across the middle of the circle representing Person B, indicating IM interference with B's normal ability to respond thoughtfully to suggestions from A. Fortunately A is able to respond quickly and sensibly to B's concern. A wisely deals with B's internal monologue until B gets it under control. The wavy IM line can then be removed from Person B's circle to show that relatively free responses from B are possible.

Although B started internal monologue that might have led to a predominatly acted out event, because his covert concern was recognized and dealt with by A, no script developed. Had A and B both become defensive, working through would have been quite unlikely. Standard boss-employee cliches would have surfaced, and the probability of effective collaboration to achieve job improvement would have been very low indeed.

Persistent systematic internal monologue characterizes such

structured interactions. For example, the familiar "hidden agenda" generates internal monologue that produces acting out. A participant committed in advance to a predetermined conclusion is certainly not free to respond to unexpected events with the full range of his resources. In other words, he cannot "work through."

Perhaps at this point we should turn to an example to make concrete the differences between acting out and working through. In a study of appraisal interviews it was found that most could be classified quite easily as "acted out" or "worked through." In the acted out interviews the supervisor came with his script prepared, consisting of the several recommendations he intended to ram down the employee's throat, one way or another. The employee's script had a few excluded items, namely a few facts to be concealed if possible, and some items of a favorable sort, to be dramatized. A final item in some employee's scripts was a short list of matters for possible compromise, situations where the employee could give a little and appear reasonable.

As the acted out appraisal interview proceeded it appeared that neither participant was listening to the other. They took turns politely, with uniform pauses separating their statements. While one person talked the other waited, and when his turn came, continued to follow his script. One phrase enabled both employee and supervisor to ignore the interruptions to their monologue. Very frequently each would open his next comment with the two words,

"Yes, but --".

The interviews that were worked through were in marked contrast. The supervisor might say, "I didn't know that! Tell me about it." The employee would make comments like "I guess I didn't think about how my work affected other people." The pattern of interchange was highly irregular, with many granted responses and a surprising incidence of "talking over." that is, both persons talking at the same time. It was evident that both were learning from the interview, both were adjusting from moment to moment, and both were surprising themselves with their discoveries. Worked through interviews left people feeling considerably happier than did those which were acted out.

Routine interpersonal communications in a working organization tend to be predominantly either acted out, or worked through. Since working through makes more human resources available and facilitates collaboration, one might conclude that it is probably worthwhile to attempt to minimize acting out and maximize working through. But, and this is a big "but", this may be the case only if getting work done is the object of the interaction.

It cannot be said that working through per se is good, and acting out is bad. Acting out may well be the more effective way of coping with many circumstances. On occasions of ritualistic communication ranging from small talk in casual contacts to routines in legislative bodies or courtrooms, acting out is useful and

essential. Any human interaction in which desired objectives can be accomplished better if events are sequenced in advance is facilitated by acting out more than it is by working through.

When it is not important that resources be combined, acting out is often the more rewarding mode. A person spending an hour in a cocktail party with strangers may choose to interact by contributing only appropriate automated responses. When the primary task is to meet predictable expectations, a thoroughly scripted acting out may well be the choice of the competent communicator.

An impression that may have resulted from our discussion is that at least two people are required to accomplish acting out or working through. Either can be done intrapersonally, by an isolated individual. One can work through a problem, bypassing structured options and seeking new possibilities. Or, one can limit his internal monologue to interpretations that are well rehearsed and ritualistic. Question: "Shall I make an exception in this unusual instance?" Response: "I never did before." Conclusion: "No." Acting out is certainly an incisive method of solving one's personal problems. Also, it utilizes only one inner resource, memory!

It is serendipitous that our examination of acting out and working through yields a secret of better listening. What one needs to do to be a better listener is to learn to improve the control of his internal monologue. When he is able to catch him-

self thinking about matters other than paying total attention to his partner in communication and stop that interference, he will be increasing his powers of concentration. With practice anyone can improve his ability to detect and control internal monologue. Eventually, with practice, one can sense and terminate these wool-gathering thoughts almost before they begin. Eliminating internal monologue frees all of a person's energies for the important duty of collecting and interpreting information provided by the person whose resources you need. This is the way of Zen, to "empty the mind" so that all your faculties become available to do the work that needs to be done. In human interaction, adjusting is made possible by sensing what the other person thinks and feels. This all-important task requires undivided and continuous attention, something made impossible by internal monologue.

Authority and Power in Task-Oriented Groups

In a working group two distinctly different modes of interaction can be identified. Both occur in all groups but over time one tends to predominate and become the group's normative life style. Specifically, a group tends to do its work by establishing power realtionships among its members, or by relying upon vesting authority in each other.

Persons in a group with authority norms treat each other as equals, each claiming the privilege to intervene at any time. A contribution by any member is examined by any or all of the other

members who accept, reject or modify it as they see fit. When the group perceives a recommendation of any one of its members as potentially productive, it may make that person the temporary leader to develop and implement the suggestion. However, as group work continues input from members remains unrestricted. The individual given the authority to lead maintains his leadership only as long as the group finds his direction productive. At any time another member may produce a better idea and find himself in the leadership role. Work groups that operate in this competency-based authority norm have leader-follower roles continuously and rapidly changing. When the resources of members are being freely contributed it is often difficult to follow the multi-directional vesting of authority as leadership is passed from person to person, unpredictably.

A group which operates in the main structuring power relationships finds security in hierarchy. It engages in a perpetual search for someone to be dominant, someone who will tell the other members what to do. Instead of the shared responsibility of the authority mode, a group using power makes the leader accountable and the commitment of members is to follow instructions rather than to modify and innovate. Dependency becomes an assumption that fulfills itself. Much may be accomplished if the person in power is perceptive and knowledgable, but the interpersonal relationship between leader and followers remains, basically, one of ascendance-

submission. Once the dependency, ascendance-submission mode is established, it is difficult to abandon. Consequently, power patterns tend to produce relatively permanent leaders, who get saddled with much more than their share of responsibility, and habitual followers, who tend to do as little as possible and rely excessively upon an all-capable leadership to get the job done.

The two groups described above are over-simplified microcosms to dramatize the operational differences between power and authority relationships in purposeful communication. Few groups in real life use only power or only authority relationships. But teams of people in the real world do tend to rely upon one or the other, predominantly. It seems quite obvious that as a group moves in the direction of increased reliance upon the authority mode, more and more varied resources of its members become available. If a group moves toward increased reliance upon power, the leaders will find themselves relatively more dependent upon their own resources, and the resources of their followers will be hoarded or grudgingly contributed.

At this point the reader may be thinking that power relationships are to be avoided, and are always a threat to productivity. Not at all. There comes a time in the life of every group -- or individual -- when the sensible thing is not to delegate authority to each other as equals but to defer to the person with the know-how. Giving power to the one individual capable of saving our lives

is always a wise decision. Even blind submission is justified in a crisis, when one person has all the expertise. Even the most democratically oriented effective groups appreciate this, and when circumstances are appropriate they shift smoothly from authority to power as their operational mode.

Here is one further implication of the authority-power distinction: when authority relationships prevail, working through is easier and more probable than it is in power relationships. Spontaneous responses that tap reserve resources are more characteristic of collaboration among peers than of communication up and down the levels of a hierarchy. Shared responsibility leads to commitment to the task more than does dependence upon an accountable leader.

Here is a summary of the essential elements that enter into the authority-power distinction.

The Interactive Distinction between Power and Authority

Authority Equal Status	Compromise	Power Ascendance Submission
Shared responsibility Wide discretion in use of resources Leader-follower roles continuously changing Multi-directional vesting of authority	Spontaneous or negotiated agreements to modify power and authority relationships	Leader is accountable Little discretion in use of resources Leader-follower roles relatively fixed Two way vesting of Power - UP-DOWN

The need for power is the need to be strong and dominant, or to be weak and dominated.

The need for authority is the need to collaborate, to work with other people as equals.

COROLLARIES:

Authority and power are perceptual
Authority and power are, fundamentally, dyadic phenomona
A power relationship is <u>with</u> someone, rather than <u>over</u> someone. Both participants must accept ascendance-submission roles.

The corollaries in the summary may not be self-evident. When we say that authority and power are perceptual we mean that neither exists unless that kind of relationship is perceived by participants. For example, a power relationship cannot be achieved until someone "knuckles under" i.e., perceives himself in a submissive role and accepts being submissive. Likewise the person leading in a power interaction must perceive his dominant role, and accept it as such. If either fails to perceive or accept this dominant-submissive relationship, then effective use of power becomes impossible. Thus, a person appointed head of a work unit is not given power by his position. His position simply gives him the right to establish power relationships with the people he supervises, if he is able to do it. He has no power with these individuals until they accept submissive roles, and perceive him as an ascendant partner in their common enterprise. The typical manager is able to establish power relationships with some of his employees, seldom all. Those who refuse to accept a submissive role may fight the boss's leadership, or may succeed in developing authority relationships with him. The flexible manager may solve many problems by creating power relations with employees who need

to be submissive and authority relations with those who function better as equals.

The above examples help to clarify the second corollary. Fundamentally, authority and power are dyadic, since the nature of the unique interaction between any two people - as they perceive it - defines their relationship of the moment as one of power or authority, predominantly. Two people working together, by themselves or in a larger group, may give each other power or authority as circumstances change. With the rapid exchanges that occur when resources are freely contributed the pair may approach Buber's ideal of dialogue. Then it becomes impossible to sort out moments of power and authority. These blend together so harmoniously that a better label for the interaction may be "compromise." Here we have a spontaneous example of the middle area of the Equal Status Ascendance - Submission-Continuum in the summary table. Of course, other compromises may not be spontaneous. A compromise may be negotiated between two strong members of a dyad who agree to trade off the right to dominate on certain matters and proceed on other issues as equals, in the authority mode. At times like these, the effects of covert forces may make this negotiation complicated and difficult.

The third corollary is repetitive of some of the above but is made necessary by the prevailing notion that power comes from the outside and forces helpless people to do what they don't want to do.

A power relationship results from a contract, in which two people agree to do something in a certain way. Like love and war, power requires cooperation. Both parties must agree to fight, or a battle cannot take place. We have learned to conceptualize sexual relations as having sex with someone rather than over someone. Similarly, we should conceptualize having power as power with rather than power over the person who accepts the submissive role. After all, the person being dominated may need the domination much more than the dominator needs to dominate! Further, the dominatee may well control the nature and extent of domination. A wise executive once instructed his new vice president: "Never give an order you are not certain will be obeyed!"

Let us look at the use of power relationships as a tool of social control. We need to answer the question, are some kinds of power more productive than others? At least a tentative answer is suggested in the distinction between personal and institutional power made by David C. McClelland.[3] He notes that all power motivated dominating persons need to be strong and influential. How they feel about that urge is what distinguishes the individual with a drive to personal power from the one who, with equal intensity, experiences a drive to institutional power. It should be noted that his use of "institutional power" does not refer to a role in an organization.

The personal power person values his control over others

primarily because it builds his self-concept. He wants to think of himself as a powerful person, and tries to validate this self-concept by demonstrating it over and over again. He wants credit and recognition. He treats the activity he dominates as though it is his private, personal possession, and prefers that others view it in the same way. He places himself in center stage at all times. His psychic income is praise, even adulation. In Maslow's terms, he has strong esteem needs.[4] Thus, personal power is self-centered. It is energized by the need to expand one's private and public image.

A person who uses institutional power reminds us of Maslow's stereotypical category of self-actualized people.[5] Rather than being the object of interest himself he finds the world around him to be much more compelling. Successful use of power is pleasing to him because it brings about changes in people and events that he considers to be worthwhile for their own sake. He has little need for recognition and is quite indifferent about receiving credit for his accomplishments. Being the power behind the throne may be more satisfying to him than being in the spotlight. The covert force of ego involvement in the person with institutional power is typically weak, in the person wielding personal power, it tends to be very strong.

Looking at the life styles of dominant people, then, we see sharp contrasts. Personal power is motivated by esteem needs, institutional power by satisfaction from achievement. Personal

power is self-centered in its rewards to the powerful individual, while institutional power is other-than-self centered.[6] The exercise of personal power involves less giving and trusting than does the exercise of institutional power. McClelland supplies data that confirms what one would suspect, that a leader who uses institutional power relates to those supervised in ways that increase their productivity when compared to leaders who rely upon personal power.[7]

We have focused attention upon the directive member of the power dyad, and have concerned ourselves with ways in which he meets his needs. Obviously the submissive member also collaborates for his own reasons. Let us see how his motivations may well parallel those of the dominant participant.

The dominatee may seek his submissive role to satisfy personal or institutional needs, as does the dominator. He may want to be dominated for personal, self-centered reasons, e.g. his need to be directed to be secure. Or, his motivation may be institutional, e.g. he just knows things go better when one follows a strong leader.

The effective power pair brings together either a personal power leader and a personal power follower, or a leader and follower who both have needs for institutional power. Mixing these different life styles in the power relationship makes collaboration difficult.

Labelling the submissive member of the power pair "powerful" violates most current uses of the term. Yet because the quiet one exerts as much control over the interaction as does the dominant

member (probably using less conspicuous techniques) we should recognize that both participants are, indeed, "powerful". Conceptualizing power as interaction may cause us to increasingly refer to "powerful dyads" or "powerful groups" rather than "powerful individuals."

McClelland evolved his categories of personal and institutional power from the four stages in the development of the power motive he postulates in his insightful book Power: The Inner Experience.[8] Because this book explores power as interaction in different cultural contexts more thoroughly than does any other source, it is highly recommended for anyone who feels that the uses of power in our world need to be better understood.

Working Through, A Blend of Eastern and Western Ways of Thinking

Why is there so little done about interactive communication at a time when almost universal allegiance is pledged to that concept? Since we agree upon the advantages of pooling resources, what prevents our adapting communication theory to accomplish that end? How is it that Eastern cultures apparently have a norm of working through for their serious, task-oriented communication while the dominant pattern in the West seems to be acting out? Because -- we in the West place an absurd amount of reliance upon cognitive processes.

By choosing a scientific model for theory building in communication we in effect restrict Westerners to acting out in

communications of consequence. Only casual interactions can be worked through. Being thoughtful and scientific requires internal monologue, i.e. conscious monitoring, which prevents free interaction. We permit spontaneity only when the topics are trivial. This is, indeed, a severe restriction. But it is inevitable as long as we treat human interaction quantitatively. M. Brewster Smith said recently, "American psychologists made a big mistake, I think, when they decided to model their discipline on physics."[3]

Let us examine the basic requisites for human interaction of a quality that might have the potential to approach Buber's ideal of dialogue. Participants in the dyad must 1) control their internal monologue to the point of being able to suppress it at will, and 2) rely upon automated responses.

Should the above requisites seem strange to the reader, let us translate them into a common experience. Suppose you are engaged in a fast moving negotiation with a worthy opponent, for high stakes. If you take time to think about what you are saying, you lose. There simply is no opportunity to calculate effects or plan ahead consciously, and certainly the impaired listening that comes from divided attention at such a time is too high a risk to take. To be effective, you must rely upon out-of-awareness processes. Either these react to incoming stimuli and supply appropriate responses, or you will fail. Being scientific, i.e. consciously methodical, only contributes to impotence in this sort of interactive

communication.

The peculiar Western notion that some good theory does not work in practice is made possible by our "scientific" attitude. We just know that all systematic and reasoned processing of data and drawing of conclusions must be done on purpose, with the doer aware of what is going on. Other cultures, particularly those of the East, recognize that forces other than conscious, purposeful reasoning often operate to produce reliable and valid interpretations of information. So, they have no problem in equating the worth of a theory with its functional utility. They pay more attention to events than we do, and are less concerned about gaps and inconsistencies in ideational constructs.

When in doubt and under stress the West turns away from personal resources to hard data and conscious processing as its last resort. The East turns to out-of-awareness, as an ultimate source of wisdom. Let us look at a Chinese and an American executive in the same bind, that of having to make a difficult and important decision.

The Chinese executive after becoming satisfied that he understands the problem and is in possession of all available relevant information, puts it out of his mind and retires for the night. At his bedside is a low table with a pad and a pencil. The next morning he awakes, and reads with interest the solution, written on the pad in his own handwriting. To him, the explanation is simple

and logical. When people go to sleep their minds join in a belt of wisdom that surrounds the world, a phenomenon our Chinese friend terms the Collective Unconscious. Through Yoga techniques it is possible to consult with these mobile minds and use their expertise. The Chinese executive makes contact with the Collective Unconscious in his sleep, and, "coming to" in a trance state, writes the result of his consultation on the pad. Then he resumes normal slumber, until awakening at his usual time, to find his decision made.

The American executive experiencing the necessity of having to make a difficult decision may attempt to live by the popular myth of high level decision making, or he may follow the path of actuality revealed by research to date on executive behavior. If he chooses to live up to the myth, he will methodically retrieve more and more data from his company's data bank and other sources, and he will assemble the most informed and experienced experts to advise him. Guided by statistical probabilities he will formulate the decision that has most benefits and fewest disadvantages.

The reason we label the above methodical and thorough procedure of decision-making a "myth" is because people believe that is the way it is, but studies of executive decision making show that it becomes actuality in only a few isolated instances.[9] The typical executive dislikes comprehensive statistical analyses. Besides, he is a busy man, endowed with many verbal skills. So,

the usual procedure is for the executive to talk briefly with a few friends about the problem, and then to make the decision, which his assistants will proceed to support with data after the fact. Our American executive does indeed make use of information, but most of it is opinion expressed in casual conversation, with little checking against "reliable sources."

The key difference between American and Chinese models is the recognition of out-of-awareness processes as legitimate and useful. Chinese are quite content to accept the output of forces which work in mysterious ways their wonders to perform. Americans need to understand what is going on before they are able to accept the consequences. But the double standard implied by the myth and the reality of American executive decision making suggests that out-of-awareness procedures are occasionally accepted in the West as useful, although regarded as illegitimate.

A breakthrough within the boundaries of science itself has helped to relieve this obligation to reject what we do not understand. A few decades ago when a medical research discovered that a medication relieved certain symptoms, the medicine could not be used until further research demonstrated how the cure took place, i.e. until the causal relationship was established. Today, for many purposes, concommitant variation is a satisfactory substitute for causation. If a new medicine can be shown to have negligible side effects while its administration coincides reliably

with relief of the targeted symptoms, the substance can be manufactured and distributed. Evolution from requiring causal relation to accepting concommitant variation may be analogous to the present trend toward using intuitive insights because they are productive rather than always requiring substantive proof.

The myth of the Western decision maker who relies totally on numerical data and verifiable "facts of the case" should be replaced by a counter myth. The Collective Unconscious is a satisfactory Eastern fantasy, but not even a charismatic persuader could sell it to the typical American manager. We need to construct a new metaphor for out-of-awareness problem solving from familiar, prestigious elements in Western culture. Electronic data processing, EDP, is such an element.

Each of us has within our nervous system an analogue computer which works with hard data and is appropriately programmed. The catch is that none of us knows the data or the details of the program. Every day this computer digests far more information that we realize or are able to think about. From time to time, when we lack enough evidence for a clearcut decision it supplements our conscious problem solving by generating a conclusion. This we conceptualize as an insight, or a hunch, or as an intuitive judgment. What we have previously failed to recognize is the rationality of the functioning of our internal computer. Our lifelong practices of suspending judgment, interpreting evidence and

detecting fallacies have been built into our computer program. Indeed, there is an excellent possibility that the majority of our critical thinking is automated data processing, done out-of-awareness!

At this point many readers may perceive the internal analogue computer as a reasonable representation of a phenomenon that previously baffled them and made them feel insecure. Those who still refuse to accept the metaphor can be converted by reminding them of the time they went to sleep with a problem and woke up with an answer. Did they understand the process by which this took place? Certainly not! Does not hypothesizing the internal, out-of-awareness computer handle this nicely? Of course! So, why fight it?

Eastern and Western ways of thinking join together when the systems approach is exploited in preparation for an interaction yet the mind is emptied, i.e. internal monologue is suppressed, during communication to permit maximum adjustment from moment to moment. Easterners rely predominantly upon out-of-awareness processes, Westerners upon cognitive processes. Each has advantages and limitations. It should be possible to move toward the best of possible worlds by learning to use either route when appropriate in preparing for and conducting communicative interactions. Similarly, in decision making we in the West can learn to shift to intuitive resources when facts and reasoning run out. A third

culture of critical thinking combining conscious and out-of-awareness rational processing of information becomes possible, extending the capabilities of East and West alike.

To summarize: interaction theory has not been applied to interpersonal communication because the Western scientific model requires that variables be consciously treated. Conscious manipulation of variables creates internal monologue, which modifies and often inhibits interaction. If interaction facilitates the combining of resources, as it obviously does, then at least for interpersonal task-oriented communication the out-of-awareness processes should be idealized, and control of internal monologue should be recognized as essential for people to work together productively. Until this inversion of popular thinking is generally accepted we will practice the present double standard of praising interaction theory and practicing one-way, sender-receiver communication.

FOOTNOTES

1. The title is adopted from one used by Robert Persig in Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance (New York: William Morrow and Co., Inc., 1974). For those who have read the book the reasons for using this title will be obvious.

2. Buber, Martin. Between Man and Man, trans. by Ronald Gregor Smith (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 97.

3. McClelland, David C. and David H. Burnham. "Power is the Great Motivator," Harvard Business Review, 54 (Mar.-Apr., 1976) 100-110.

4. Maslow, A.H. "A Dynamic Theory of Personality," Psychological Review, 50 (1943), 370-396.

5. Maslow, A.H. Motivation and Personality, 2nd ed., (New York: Harper and Row, 1970).

6. Bormann, E.G., W.S. Howell, R.G. Nichols, G.L. Shapiro, Interpersonal Communication in the Modern Organization (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), 288-292.

7. McClelland (1976), 104-106.

8. McClelland, David C. Power: The Inner Experience (New York: Livington Publishers, Inc., 1975).

9. Smith, M. Brewster with Colin Campbell, "Our Many Versions of the Self," Psychology Today, 9 (Feb., 1976), 74.